



The Ripline

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Newsletter of the BRISTOL UNIVERSITY HOT AIR BALLOONING SOCIETY

WARNING AND DISCLAIMER - TAKING THIS EDITION OF RIPLINE TOO SERIOUSLY IS A BAD IDEA!

Well, we're all fed up of mince pies, Christmas shopping and adverts for what films are on on Boxing Day, so it must be the start of December! Welcome to the "Midwinter" edition of the Ripline, your oasis of calm in a sea of novelty Christmas lights.

With the New Year on the way, we're hoping for lots of flyable weekends next term. This should mean everyone gets lots of flying opportunities if they keep signing up! We can't emphasise enough that the more you sign up the more chance you've got to fly! As normal please keep us informed about changes in address, and check that you're getting e-mails from us about every week!

Hugo & Ellie

Socials!

Well, yet again the day after a BUHABS social saw several members of the committee nursing sore heads! Indoor ballooning allowed some members who hadn't yet come out flying to see how we set up the balloon for flight, ask lots of questions, meet the pilots and have a few drinks. Thanks to Nicola (and her Dad) for the loan of a 5ft high model balloon which floated gracefully across the Anson Room, inflated from a fan heater and hairdryer! We have christened it BUHABS 5 ¾ in true Harry Potter style. The Berkeley was the venue for beverage consumption after packing the balloon up.

Christmas Meal.

Tuesday December 10th, 8pm in the Epi, meal at 9pm.

Ready for some hot chicken action? Excellent. Nando's on Park Street is the venue for the BUHABS meal. Nando's is a Portuguese Chicken restaurant with a great party atmosphere. They do serve non-chicken dishes as well, but the chicken is delicious, and comes in a range of spiciness from very mild to lethally hot! There are also bottomless soft drinks and bottomless frozen yoghurt, both reasonably priced. As a guide main dishes are between about £5 and £8 a head.

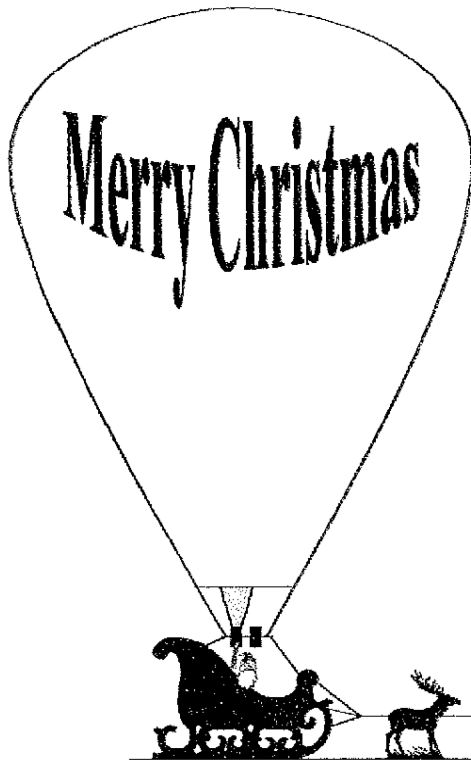
Meal starts at 9pm, so we'll meet up for a drink at 8pm at the Epi. Places are limited, so if you want to come, it's best to phone Hugo [redacted] as soon as possible. We'll arrange some Christmas crackers and by Presidential Decree, anyone chickening out (no pun intended) of wearing the paper hats will be docked at least 4 squillion crewing points!!! Only kidding :-). No doubt a few drinks will be had afterwards as well.....

THE ICICLE BALLOON MEET - 4th and 5th January 2003.

This is an annual Balloon meet held just after the New Year. It involves around 100 balloons flying from a farm in Wiltshire. Flying with 100 other balloons is an amazing experience not to be missed and for new members it is the first of several opportunities for going to large balloon meets and Fiestas this academic year. Because of the distance involved it is usually a whole day's outing, so there is the opportunity for two flights in a day! BUHABS hope to fly on both days. If you're interested or would like more info, please e-mail Tim on [redacted] as soon as possible. Places are filled on a strictly first come first served basis. Please note that it is during the Christmas holiday, so you will obviously need to be in Bristol on that weekend.

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

In a world exclusive, The Ripline reveals that Father Christmas has finally finished testing of his new 780,000 cubic foot Hot-Air Balloon. He intends to operate the balloon for the first time this



Christmas to assist with the delivery of Christmas presents in the Bristol Area. The Satellite navigation system and floodlights allows flying at night, and in zero-visibility, so Rudolph has been retired to reduce Direct Operating costs. St. Nick was having considerable difficulty learning to control the balloon on approach to land. In an especially nasty drag landing, considerable damage was done to a roof in Redland. The big man's instructor was heard manically chanting "Rip, Rip, Rip, Rip, RIP!" There was then a series of loud crunches and a jovial cry of "Ho, Ho, Ho". In another incident Students at one Bristol Hall of Residence awoke at 4am to manic screams of "For God's sake Double Burn! NOW!". Fortunately, the disturbance was blamed on excess alcohol the night before.

Dear Aunty BUHABS.....

I'm having a terrible problem and I need your advice, the thing is I'm having difficulty with my hot-inflations. They cause me much embarrassment since everyone else seems to be so much better at it than I am, is it just because of inexperience?

Before commencing a hot inflation, a pilot must ensure the mouth is a wide semicircle. Preparation is the key here, and a wide open mouth is best achieved by ensuring the inflation fan is run at full speed for several minutes. Those pilots that rush this stage because they are desperate to get going are likely to make a poor inflation. Before commencing any inflation the crew must be fully briefed about precautions, procedures and so on.

A rhythmical burning action is the best way to introduce heat into the balloon. Good pilots develop a feel for the correct rhythm with practise. Watching the ripples on the balloon's skin is a good indicator for those less experienced. If the inflation is conducted at the correct speed, the balloon rises steadily, restrained by the crown-line crew. If heat is introduced too quickly, the mouth may close as the balloon comes upright. This is generally a bad thing, you may have to deflate the balloon and start again from scratch, with much irritation and delay. If you press on regardless, burning may occur, which may require professional repair. This can seriously damage a pilot's ego.

A good pilot can inflate balloons safely quite quickly, in this respect there is no substitute for experience and practice.

And Finally, a deeply serious Presidential Christmas message.....

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!